

November 3, 2011



District 2 Commissioner
Doug Gilpin
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785

Dear Commissioner Gilpin,

A few months ago I wrote to the Sumter County Commissioners regarding the need to have county installation standards and building permit requirements for lightning protection systems (LPS) installed in residential structures. The advantages of having these standards and permit requirements are listed on a separate sheet. You won't see a disadvantages sheet because I haven't discovered any.

Direct and indirect lightning strikes are the most consistent property damage threats to residential buildings in Central Florida. Government officials have an obligation to residents in their jurisdiction to insure appropriate standards are followed for all residential construction. This obligation is more critical in Sumter County due to the large number of homes being built each year – very likely more homes than any other county in the country.

The county currently has permit requirements for innocuous items like skylights and screen enclosures, but none for LPS. Bear in mind there are no national standards for skylights and screen enclosures, however, there is a nationally recognized standard for residential LPS (National Fire Protection Association 780, Standard for the Installation of Lightning Protection Systems, 2008 Edition)

No sane person would suggest the county adopt a code requirement for the installation of residential LPS. However, it is very appropriate for the county to adopt a reference standard and permit requirement for any homeowner who elects to have an LPS installed in their residence. The county does not require anyone to build a home. But if you elect to build one, there are required standards and a permit process for numerous construction features in the home. The active home building in Sumter County combined with the seasonal lightning threats mandates the county to have the same procedures for residential LPS.

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Admin Div _____

Com Svcs Div _____

Your support for installation standards and building permit requirements for residential LPS will help keep scam artists out of our country (I guarantee they will swarm in when the next Villages home is destroyed by lightning). It will also insure residents who elect to purchase LPS are getting systems that meet a nationally recognized installation standard.

Thanks for your attention to this important matter!

Sincerely,



Rich Cardillo
2492 Bayport Place
The Villages, FL 32162-3437
352-750-6367
rcardillo@thevillages.net

Background Information

I am a 10-year Villages resident who had a career in fire prevention. I do not have any affiliation with any firm or organization related to the lightning industry.

ADDENDUM

Advantages to having county installation standards and building permit requirements for lightning protection systems (LPS) installed in residential structures:

- It will insure optional residential LPS systems are installed in compliance with a nationally recognized installation standard – National Fire Protection Association 780, Standard for the Installation of Lightning Protection Systems, 2008 Edition
- It will insure optional LPS are installed by qualified contractors* who are properly licensed and insured.

Another indirect benefit will be LPS education from The Villages Public Safety Department once LPS standards are incorporated into Sumter County building codes.** This organization is responsible for the public safety of thousands of residents, yet it will never address property lightning protection issues to Sumter County residents until the county initiates installation standards and permit requirements for LPS installations. This is true despite the total destruction of at least 7 homes in The Villages during the past 10 years due to lightning strikes.

Also, each year homes in our community suffer thousands of dollars in property damage due to indirect lightning strikes (e.g. loss of TV's, microwaves, phones, garage door openers, sprinkler controllers, and computer equipment). These statistics highlight the need for more education about ways to avoid property damage from this destructive seasonal threat.

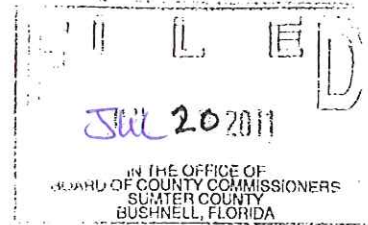
*A "qualified contractor" for residential LPS is defined as a Florida licensed and bonded contractor that is listed by the Lightning Protection Institute and/or Underwriters Laboratories.

**During the past several years The Villages Public Safety Department has hosted a Hurricane Expo prior to the summer storm season. Despite the severe lightning threats each summer and the destruction of numerous homes to lightning hits, the department has never incorporated any type of direct lightning protection information into the expo format.

Power companies that attend the expo provide protection information about *indirect* lightning strikes, but their booths are in the parking lot, *not* inside the building with other vendors, some of who have nothing to do with hurricane protection – a skylight installer and a decorative door glass installer??

July 19, 2011

District 1 Commissioner
Richard Hoffman
7375 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785



Dear Commissioner Hoffman,

This letter addresses a situation that needs prompt attention by the Sumter County Commissioners. Currently there are no county installation standards or building permit requirements for lightning protection systems (LPS) installed in residential structures. Having a referenced installation standard and permit requirement for residential LPS accomplishes the following:

- It will insure optional residential LPS systems are installed in compliance with a nationally recognized installation standard – National Fire Protection Association 780, Standard for the Installation of Lightning Protection Systems, 2008 Edition
- It will insure optional LPS are installed by qualified contractors* who are properly licensed and insured.

Another indirect benefit will be LPS education from The Villages Public Safety Department once LPS standards are incorporated into Sumter County building codes. ** This organization is responsible for the public safety of thousands of residents, yet it will never address property lightning protection issues to Sumter County residents until the county initiates installation standards and permit requirements for LPS installations. This is true despite the total destruction of at least 7 homes in The Villages during the past 10 years due to lightning strikes. Also, each year homes in our community suffer thousands of dollars in property damage due to direct and indirect lightning strikes (e.g. loss of TV's, microwaves, phones, garage door openers, sprinkler controllers, and computer equipment). These statistics highlight the need for more education about ways to avoid property damage from this destructive seasonal threat.

A few years ago I had a screen installed on the front porch of my Villages home. In order to do the work, my contractor had to secure a building permit and have the installation inspected by a county official. It's hard to believe this innocuous installation required a permit and inspection, yet the county does NOT have a similar requirement for residential LPS!

Copy To:

Commrs

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Com Svcs Div

Received 7.20.11 ji

March 23, 2010

b. County Attorney

1. Florida Attorney General's Opinion on the use of Tourist Development Tax funds for stocking lakes with game fish (For Information Only)

Derrill McAteer gave a summary of the Attorney General Opinion. It was consensus of the Board to move forward with lake enhancements.

03-23-10-2-b

2. SECO Contract

Mr. McAteer explained minor changes to the SECO contract being considered under Agenda Item 3.d.10.

c. Clerk of Court - No report.

d. Board Members

Commissioner Hoffman

Commissioner Hoffman discussed an upcoming meeting of the Withlacoochee Regional Water Authority Board on April 21, 2010.

03-23-10-2-d-1

Commissioner Breeden

Commissioner Breeden discussed the comprehensive change regarding mining in Sumter County. After additional discussion by the Board, the consensus was to have Mr. Arnold research avenues for gathering information and report back at the next meeting.

Vice Chairman Burgess - No report.

2nd Vice Chairman Mask - No report.

Chairman Gilpin - No report.

e. Public Forum

Len Hathaway, 1568 Hartsville Trail, The Villages, approached the Board regarding a scam of Village residents by lightning protection system installers.

Ron Durham, 2065 Hartford Path, The Villages, discussed the digesters at Solid Waste and the downturn in production at the mines in Sumter County.

Subj: **Re: FW: Response**
Date: 3/12/2010 1:01:25 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: STALIT1@aol.com
To: rsammons@FBPE.org
CC: lhatha@aol.com, Stallt1@aol.com

Ms. Sammons:

Thank you for your response of March 4th, including the letter to me from Mr. John Burke.
I have been out of town and thus late in getting back to you.

We have a question about the following statement in the third paragraph of Mr. Burke's letter.

"In research of this matter, we would direct your attention to the Electrical Contractor's Laws and Rules as they do require that a licensed electrical contractor install the connection between the lightning protection system and the grounding system".

The "grounding system", per the NEC, can be either a proper driven ground rod, or a proper concrete encased ground system. It is proper and required that the telephone, CATV and Satellite cable systems also be connected to the house grounding system. I am not aware of any requirement prohibiting their installers from making that connection. A lightning protection system contractor that is a UL and LPI listed installer cannot make this connection? I would like to ask Mr. Burke if he has any additional comment on this item.

I really appreciate the attention that you, Mr. Burke and the Florida Board of Professional Engineers have given to this concern.

Sincerely,
Robert G. Freeman
Stallt1@aol.com

Kegan, Bob

From: Kegan, Bob
Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2010 9:21 AM
To: Arnold, Bradley
Subject: RE: Regulation of Lightning Protection System Installers

Thank you.

From: Arnold, Bradley
Sent: Wednesday, January 06, 2010 8:23 AM
To: 'Lhatha@aol.com '
Cc: Hoffman, Richard; Kegan, Bob
Subject: Regulation of Lightning Protection System Installers
Importance: High

Mr. Hathaway,

Commissioner Hoffman requested I provide a concise response to your inquiry whether Sumter County staff will initiate the imposition of local regulations and the enforcement of the same for lightning protection systems. The answer is no we do not intend to recommend the imposition of local regulations of lightning protection system installers. There is considerable debate even among our neighboring counties' Building Officials regarding these systems and even the ones that decided to permit them in some instances do not inspect them.

Any person in Sumter County that intends to install such a system will be encourage to contract with Florida Registered Professional Electrical Engineer to ensure the design and installation of the system is consistent with sound engineering practices.

Bradley Arnold
County Administrator
(352) 793-0200 - voice
(352) 303-0375 - cell
(352) 793-0207 - fax

910 North Main Street
Bushnell, Florida 33513

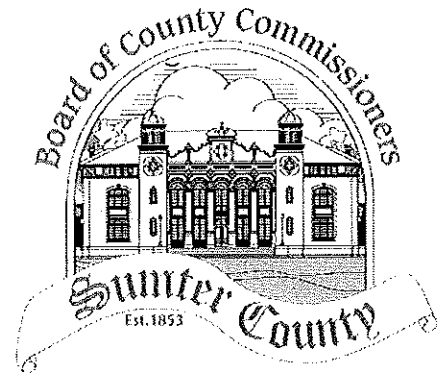
Bradley.Arnold@sumtercountyfl.gov

Board of County Commissioners

Division of Planning & Development

Building Services Department

910 N. Main Street, Suite 301 • Bushnell, FL 33513 • Phone (352) 793-0270 • FAX: (352) 793-0274
Website: <http://sumtercountyfl.gov/plandevlop/building>



Memo

To: Mr. Bradley Arnold, County Administrator
From: Robert Kegan, Building Official
Date: 11/1/09
RE: Lightning Protection Systems – Meeting

Those attended:

1. Len Hathaway – Village resident with a back ground in Fire Protection Consultant
2. Bob Freeman – Village resident with a back ground in Electrical Engineering
3. Robert Kegan – Sumter County Building Official
4. William Dixon – Sumter County Chief Plans Examiner
5. Michael Timpanaro - Sumter County Commercial Electrical Inspector and State of Florida recognized National Electrical Code Instructor

Documents provided for discussion:

1. Mr. Hathaway's and Mr. Freeman's – agenda
2. Mr. Hathaway's documents from a meeting with Mike Tucker, Villages Fire Chief
3. Mr. Hathaway's letter to Mr. Dick Hoffman County Commissioner
4. Mr. Hathaway's – Study Group of Lightning Mission Statement
5. Underwriters Laboratories (UL) – UL's Inspection Program and property owners Certification
6. List of Certified Lightning Protection contractors
7. Comm 2000 UL publication standards
8. Mike Holt National Electrical Code Instructor - commentary on Lightning Protection
9. Master Label for Certificate of Protection form

Robert E. Kegan, CBO
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Chairman
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Randy Mask, Dist 5
2nd Vice Chairman
Office: (352) 793-0200
Home: (352) 793-3930
910 N. Main Street
Bushnell, FL 33513

10. Building Officials Informal Interpretation reports (3)
11. Department of Business and Regulation FAQ's
12. Corrugated Stainless Steel Tubing vs. Lightning

The ninety minutes of discussion touched on almost every item of Mr. Hathaway's agenda. A brief synopsis of the meeting follows.

1. Lightning Protection System Licensing - State Certification, Local Licensing and UL certified installers:
 - a. UL Certified Installers – These companies and individuals provide certified installation of the system. Building Services inspects these commercial systems for the correct grounding. Building Services requires a copy of the Certificate at the final inspection.
 - b. Department of Business and Professional Regulation have decided not to license Lightning Protection System Installers. They have acknowledged that Electrical Engineers and Certified Electrical Contractors are proficient at designing and installing Lightning Protection Systems to meet the National Electrical Code (NEC) and the UL requirements. These systems are for commercial applications only. The Florida Building Code requires electrical permits for the inspection of the grounding portion of the system.
 - c. Locally licensed installers – Palm Beach County and Broward County have licensure for Lightning Protection System Contractors. The Counties electrical inspectors inspect the grounding of the Lightning Protection System not the design.
2. Should it be the County Commissions desire to license Lightning Protection System Contractors:
 - a. The Licensing Ordinance would have to be revised with specific criteria addressing testing for Commercial and Residential Lightning System Contractors.
 - b. The fee schedule would require a revision to accommodate plan review and inspections.
 - c. Funding for Building Services plan review/inspection staff training for design certification.
 - d. The liability to the county would need to be addressed by the County Attorney.
3. Other related issues discussed:
 - a. Public awareness
 - b. Grounding electrodes
 - c. Nothing would prohibit homeowners from acquiring their own permits and use individuals that are unqualified.
 - d. Gas system lines with corrugated stainless steel tubing running through the attic.

- e. It was agreed by all that placing a lightning protection system on a property does not assure the lightning will strike the electrodes and not another portion of the building or structure on property.

4. Summary:

Based on all of the documentation received I am reluctant in suggesting County licensure be required. I also feel that permitting and inspections other than what the Florida Building Code requires should remain status quo. Underwriters Laboratories has a certification program in place and should be utilized.

There is a consumer beware issue that needs to be recognized. This needs to be addressed so unqualified businesses do not take unfair advantage of our home owners. I think Mr. Hathaway and Mr. Freeman have laid a good foundation for getting the word out.

Please find documentation attached.